



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

January 6, 2005

THOMAS D. WATKINS, JR.  
SUPERINTENDENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** State Board of Education  
**FROM:** Thomas D. Watkins, Jr. *Chairman*  
*Tom Watkins*  
**SUBJECT:** Report on Universal Education Vision and Principles

On June 26, 2003, the State Board of Education (Board) directed the Superintendent to prepare a draft position paper, specifically a vision and principles, on universal education.

To meet this request, a referent group met over a period of six months, beginning January 2004, to develop the vision and principles. The draft position paper (Attachment A) includes:

- A vision statement regarding the education of all students, including diverse learners.
- Principles of universal education that support desired outcomes for all students.

The charge to the group included aligning the vision and principles with statutory requirements. A matrix that identifies related statutory and regulatory requirements was developed (Attachment B).

The referent group included a broad representation of stakeholders reflecting the many diverse populations of learners (Attachment C). The work of the referent group was supported through a structured dialogue process. A core team of Department staff from several offices provided technical support in order to complete the charge from the Board (Attachment D).

The vision and principles can be used as a framework for existing and related policies adopted by the Board, and as a basis to guide future actions and policy decisions to better meet the educational needs of all learners. The vision and principles provide a provocative view of the range of diverse learners and underscore sensitivity to the challenge of effective education for all students. This work supports the Board's strategic goal for helping all children and students achieve.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education accept the Report on Vision and Principles for Universal Education, as identified in the Superintendent's memorandum dated January 6, 2005 and disseminate for field review.

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## VISION OF UNIVERSAL EDUCATION

Every individual's success is important to our society. Each person deserves and needs a concerned, accepting educational community that values diversity and provides a comprehensive system of individual supports from birth to adulthood. Universal Education removes barriers, provides flexible and responsive supports and facilitates life-long learning for all.

The principles of Universal Education reflect the beliefs that in order to support the learning of all in achieving desired educational outcomes, there must be:

- ◆ A learning community...
- ◆ A learning environment (culture; resources)...
- ◆ Adult and student learning...

Learners in all of their diversity come from a variety of backgrounds and life situations that may pose barriers to their access to, experience with, and progress in public education. The following graphic identifies some of those factors affecting today's learners from birth to adulthood.



\* Youth in transition are young people in temporary placements (i.e., awaiting foster care placement or institutional placement, staying temporarily with friends or relatives).

## PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL EDUCATION

### *The learning community*

#### ***Universal Education...***

- ✦ Builds a community that values diversity among all stakeholders and students, birth through adulthood.
- ✦ Engages broad-based working partnerships in removing all barriers that interfere, impede and/or prohibit access to the full range of learning opportunities.
- ✦ Recognizes and supports the critical, essential role that families/primary caregivers, in all of their diversity, play in the development and education of their children.
- ✦ Necessitates involvement of a broad-base of stakeholders that influence public policy and practice:
  - State Board of Education
  - Educational organizations and associations
  - Executive branch of government
  - Teacher training and preservice institutions
  - Human service system
  - Parent/teacher/student groups
  - Advocacy groups and organizations
  - Legislature
  - Business and community organizations
  - Corrections/juvenile justice system
  - Other stakeholders

### *The learning environment (culture and resources)*

#### *The culture...*

#### ***Universal Education...***

- ✦ Creates a safe and accepting learning environment in partnership with families and community characterized by mutual support, respect, and responsibility.
- ✦ Is guided by a commitment to educational excellence, democracy and social justice (equity) to create a sense of belonging.
- ✦ Honors the rights of all students to learn together.
- ✦ Supports and facilitates learning for all from birth through adulthood, including those who may be disenfranchised or marginalized, inhibiting in some way their achievement of individual education outcomes.

#### *The resources...*

#### ***Universal Education...***

- ✦ Assures access to resources and provides support for teachers and students.
- ✦ Provides resources to create flexible instruction and learning environments designed for all learners, building on strengths, needs and interests.
- ✦ Supports policies and practices to prevent learning problems stemming from physical, environmental, social, and emotional factors.
- ✦ Promotes leadership among stakeholder groups that guides continuous instructional improvement.

### *Adult and student learning...*

#### ***Universal Education...***

- ✦ Ensures effective educator pre-service and on-going professional development.
- ✦ Implements effective, instructional practices, which align with individual learning styles, interests, and strengths moving the student from the edge of competence forward.
- ✦ Uses student performance and growth data to design, implement, evaluate, and adjust instruction, school environment and professional development.
- ✦ Ensures that students will be assessed based on growth in addition to broad, standardized tests or benchmarks of achievement.



**Matrix of Selected Federal Statutes &/or Regulations**  
 Universal Education Referent Group (1/27/04)

Notes: X = the population that has initial access to eligibility for services or protections under this law  Shaded rows = clusters used in working definition of "learners"  White rows = examples	Title I, Part A: Basic Programs	Title I, Part C: Migratory Children	Title I, Part D: Neglected/Delinquent/At-Risk	Title I, Part G: Advanced Placement	Title III: Language Instruction for LEP/Immig.	Title V, Section D, Subpart 6: Gifted & Talented	Title VI, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural Education	Title VII, Part A: Indian Education	Title VII-B: Native Hawaiian Education	Title VII, Part C: Alaska Native Education	Title X, McKinney-Vento	IDEA	Section 504	Technology IDEA	ADA	Title IX: Discrimination Based on Sex/Blindness
Pregnant / Parenting Teens																
Mental Health Issues																
Abused children																
Limited English Profic.					X											
Health Issues																
Asthmatic																
Diabetic																
HIV positive																
Lead Poisoning																
Drug involved / Addicted																
Disability													X	X	X	X
Court Systems Involved																
Delinquent			X													
Adjudicated youth			X													
Foster children																
Racial Ethnic Minorities																
Immigrants																
Ethnic minorities									X	X						
Migrant students		X														
Native Americans								X								
Refugees																
Overseas Adoptions																
Religion																
Gender																X
Sexual Orientation																
Attraction																
GLBTQ <sup>1</sup>																
Homeless																
Unaccompanied youth																
At risk for drop out; truant																
Emancipated minors																
Advanced & accelerated				X		X										
High poverty																
Transitional																
Suspended / expelled																
Runaway																
Early Childhood																
Other																

<sup>1</sup> GLBTQ = Gay / Lesbian / Bi-sexual / Transgender / Questioning



**Matrix of Selected State Statutes &/or Regulations**  
**Universal Education Referent Group (1/27/04)**

<b>Notes:</b> <i>X = the population that has initial access to eligibility for services or protections under this law</i>  <i>Shaded rows = clusters used in working definition of "learners"</i>  <i>White rows = examples</i>	MI State School Aid Act, Section 31a: At-Risk	Education for the Gifted and Talented	Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act	Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act	School Code	State School Aid Act	Public Health Code	Critical Health Problems Education Act	MSD/B	MSD	MSB	Federal and State Aid to Vocational Education	Rehabilitation Act of 1964	Youth Employment Standards	Administrative Rules for Special Education
Pregnant / Parenting Teens															
Mental Health Issues															
Abused children															
Limited English Proficiency															
Health Issues															
Asthmatic					X										
Diabetic															
HIV positive							X								
Lead Poisoning															
Drug involved / Addicted															
Disability			X		X				X		X		X		X
Court Systems Involved															
Delinquent															
Adjudicated youth															
Foster children															
Racial Ethnic Minorities				X											
Immigrants				X											
Ethnic minorities				X											
Migrant students															
Native Americans															
Refugees															
Overseas Adoptions				X											
Religion				X											
Gender															
Sexual Orientation / Attraction															
GLBTQ <sup>2</sup>															
Homeless															
Unaccompanied youth															
At risk for drop out; truant															
Emancipated minors															
Advanced & accelerated		X													
High poverty	X														
Transitional															
Suspended / expelled					X										
Runaway															
Early Childhood															
Other															

<sup>2</sup> GLBTQ = Gay / Lesbian / Bi-sexual / Transgender / Questioning